

Claims

What is claimed is:

5 ^{sub} A computerized method for retrieving multidimensional data from a database in response
AV to a user query, comprising the steps of:

- 5 a. first searching said database to retrieve data based on said query;
- b. presenting retrieved data to user;
- c. receiving user input;
- d. transforming said database based on said user input to generate a transformed database;
- e. successively searching said transformed database to retrieve data; and
- 10 f. repeating steps b through e until the results for the said query is satisfied by the user.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein said step of transforming said database further comprises reformulating the query based on said user input and wherein said searching said transformed database comprises searching said transformed database based on said reformulated query.

15 3. The method of Claim 1 further comprising extracting indices from said database and wherein said searching is preceded by retrieving indices to focus said search on indexed information in said database.

4. The method of Claim 3 wherein said successively searching transformed database comprises applying said extracted indices to said transformed database.

5. Apparatus for performing retrieval of information in response to a user query in a system having at least one client location and at least one server location comprising:

a. at least one database storing said information at said at least one server;

b. a multidimensional indexing engine at said at least one server for maintaining indices related to information in said at least one database and for retrieving said indices in response to said query;

c. a similarity query engine at said server for conducting searches of said at least one database in response to a query;

wherein said similarity query engine receives information regarding said retrieved indices from said multidimensional indexing engine for identifying database areas to be searched.

6. The apparatus of Claim 5 further comprising means for displaying retrieved information at said client location and for receiving user input regarding said retrieved information.

7. The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein said multidimensional indexing engine is adapted to refine said indices based on said user input.

8. The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein each of said at least one server location additionally comprises processor means for reformulating said query based on said user input.

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9. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for retrieving multidimensional data from a database in response to a user query, said method steps comprising:

- a. first searching said database to retrieve data based on said query;
- 5 b. presenting retrieved data to user;
- c. receiving user input;
- d. transforming said database based on said user input to generate a transformed database;
- e. successively searching said transformed database to retrieve data; and
- f. repeating steps b through e until said query is satisfied.

10 10. The device of Claim 9 wherein said method step of transforming said database further comprises reformulating the query based on said user input and wherein said searching said transformed database comprises searching said transformed database based on said reformulated query.

15 11. The device of Claim 9 wherein said method further comprises extracting indices from said database and wherein said searching is preceded by retrieving indices to focus said search on indexed information in said database.

12. The device of Claim 11 wherein said successively searching transformed database comprises applying said extracted indices to said transformed database.